THE DICKENSIAN

A Magazine for Dickens Lovers
and Monthly Record of the Dickens Fellowship

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WHEN FOUND—

THE Fellowship will hold its celebration of the ninety-third anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, E.C., on Friday, 8 February, at 7.30 p.m. Mr. Henry F. Dickens, K.C., will be in the chair, and will deliver his annual presidential address; and among the Vice-Presidents who hope to attend are Miss Georgina Hogarth, Mrs. H. F. Dickens and the Misses Dickens, Canon Benham, Mr. J. C. Parkinson, Mr. G. K. Chesterton, Mr. Edmund Dickens, Mr. Charles Mathews, Mr. M. H. Spielmann, and Mr. H. Snowden Ward. A series of Dickens character impersonations will be given by Mr. Paul Mardol, and Mr. Ernest Wellbeloved has arranged a programme of Dickens recitals that will be most interesting. Among those who will assist in this programme are Miss Barbara Allison, Mr. Albert Bangert, Mr. Walter F. James, and Mr. Wellbeloved. Members will be admitted free, but it will be necessary to produce their cards of membership for the current year. Tickets for non-members may be obtained from headquarters, price one shilling each.

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There is an interesting article entitled "Charles Dickens Revisited," by William A. Sibbald, in the January *Westminster Review*, which is at the same time not a little curious. After making the statement that "a novelist is to be judged by his novels as the expression in terms of art of his intellectual and imaginative powers, and not as they further this or that social propaganda," which few, by the way, will agree with, the writer asks the question, "Is Dickens a vital force in literature?" and answers it in the negative. Now the curious part of the article is that throughout the pages which follow Mr. Sibbald proves by his own words over and over again that Dickens is not only a vital force in literature, but in the social life of to-day as well; and in his final paragraph says, "By influence, not less than by performance, he ranks as one of the great forces of English literature. Time may diminish the potency of his appeal; ignore it, never." He speaks, too, of Dickens's humour as being "his true patent for immortality. So long as purity and chivalry, mirth and laughter have dominion on the earth, so long will the name of Charles Dickens endure and his power extend. And as one takes leave of him, it is with the conviction that wheresoever his influence may penetrate, *there* will be one beneficent and humanizing agent the more at work among men."

* * *

There is no doubt that Mr. Sibbald is an out-and-out admirer of the novelist, and if he was in doubt about it at one time this "Revisit" to his works must have set all doubt at rest. He speaks of those who say they "can't read" Dickens. There are of course plenty such,

as there are plenty who confess not to be able to read Thackeray, Scott, George Eliot, George Meredith, and those other writers who are considered "literary forces." But that proves nothing, except, perhaps, that they don't try. It is a fact, however, an indisputable fact, that the works of Dickens are bought and read more than any other three writers of the Victorian era put together, and that his works live in the memory of the reader as no others do. The cause of this may be his humour merely, it may be only his humanity, as Mr. Sibbald suggests; but these two attributes go a long way towards the realization of a "literary force," surely.

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The early part of this year brought from subscribers many pleasant messages to the Editor on the conduct of *The Dickensian*, each and all giving assurance of how much our efforts are appreciated by those who look forward to our little magazine each month. One such in particular gives us great pleasure and satisfaction, and comes from Mr. Edward J. Devlin, Sacramento, California. "I am stating but the simple truth," he says, "when I tell you that I get more real pleasure out of *The Dickensian* than from all the magazines I read, and it is the only one that I preserve for binding at the end of the year. You seem to know exactly what all lovers of Dickens want to read, and you preserve the idea upon which the publication was founded with a consistency that is admirable, while at the same time you avoid prosiness and dullness. I wish you every success, and hope I may long have the pleasure of receiving your delightful issues." Such unsolicited testimonials do much to lighten and brighten the work of those responsible for each monthly issue, and we thank Mr. Devlin heartily for his encouragement.

* * *

Yet another edition of the works of Dickens is to be added to the many now existing, to be known as the "Popular Edition," and which promises to surpass for cheapness and excellence any of the reprints at present upon the market, is being issued by Messrs. Chapman & Hall. There had long been an unsatisfied demand for a complete edition, which shall be within the means of every one, and shall, at the same time, be an ornament of taste to any library; and in producing a complete edition (and no edition is complete without Messrs. Chapman & Hall's imprint) in the best possible style that modern paper, type, and binding will allow, the publishers are sure to meet with that world-wide response which so large an undertaking necessarily requires to render it remunerative. The "Popular Edition" will comprise the whole of Dickens's writings contained in the famous "Gadshill Edition," and will occupy twenty-two volumes, printed on good paper, from large, clear type, and issued in cloth, 1s. net; leather, 2s. net.

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The design on the wrapper of our present number is reproduced from the cloth cover of the new edition of Fred. G. Kitton's *Life of Charles Dickens*, recently published. It is drawn by N. M. Price, who has realized the characters wonderfully well and grouped them admirably. Our thanks are due to Messrs. T. C. & E. C. Jack for kindly giving us permission to make use of the design.

THE EDITOR.

BOZ AND HIS PUBLISHERS

By PERCY FITZGERALD, M.A., F.S.A.

II

RICHARD BENTLEY AND HIS "MISCELLANY"

CHAPTER I

BOZ was many things in his life, and filled many parts; but we do not often seriously think that, great writer as he was, for over twenty years he was actually a publisher with an office, "bill-posters," advertisements, and the rest. And an excellent, businesslike publisher he was. No one when he was about to bring out a new story in his journal advertised so splendidly. His orange-coloured bills printed in red and black, six feet long, were seen everywhere. But let us to our Richard Bentley of New Burlington Street, "successor to Henry Colburn," a remarkable man in his profession, notable always for the interesting and dramatic character of the books he issued and for the distinguished writers that he enrolled. He had a strong character, was bold and even daring in his plans—and generally successful.

Dickens had a sort of indirect connexion with Colburn the publisher, who issued all the fashionable novels of the day. Colburn's wife was one of my best friends. It is not generally known that she married *en second noces* the sturdy John Forster, Boz's friend and adviser; and she brought him as her dowry much money, a number of valuable copyrights, and some valuable MSS., notably all the correspondence of David Garrick.

I see Richard Bentley now, as I saw him for the first time in his office at New Burlington Street. A short, pink-faced man, with great white whiskers and bristly, wiry hair; smart of speech, and fluent—pleasant also, with a cordiality and *bonhomie* that some may have considered was affected. I at least have reason to speak of him with sincere gratitude, for his treatment of me was singularly generous and encouraging. I had written a two-volume story called *Mildrington the Barrister*, a first novel which had not been very successful. He read it, and was so satisfied with it that he not only took "the stock" off the publisher's hands and reissued it himself, but he made this very "sporting" proposal: "I tell you what," he said, "you go and write me a novel, and I will give you a hundred and fifty pounds for it." And so he did. *Bella Donna*, I was gratified to find for his sake, was a success, passed rapidly into a second edition, and made a sort of name for the author, who called himself "Gilbert Dyce." That office or literary studio became afterwards a pleasant resort, and I often found my way thither during the three generations of the house of Bentley.

Before the success of *Pickwick* was assured, he had "marked down" Boz, who was introduced to him by George Hogarth, Boz's father-in-law. So soon as he had secured his Boz, he conceived the idea of utilizing him in many ways, notably by issuing a magazine of a very brilliant and unusual order, which should be illustrated by the best artist of the day, George Cruikshank, and directed by the young Dickens. He gave him £20 a month, increased later to £30. The magazine was quite a new departure, and was laid out on handsome lines.

In those days it was no manufacture of sentences—at so much per "thousand words." Not then had been heard the odious stipulation, "You may write me an article of not more than five thousand words." I have before me now some five handsome and substantial volumes which contain all the numbers that were issued under Boz's directions, some twenty or so in all. Bound up with the text are all the wrappers, advertisements, addresses, which seem to impart a sort of living contemporary interest to the pages. There is even a local colour. It seems to bring before us the strenuous youth, only twenty-four, who was directing not only this venture but many other enterprises, and we see in all his various contributions evidence of his buoyant intrepid nature and high spirits. The first number appeared on 2 January, 1837, when the editor was nearly half-way through his immortal *Pickwick*. There had been some uncertainty as to the title. One had been settled on and actually advertised, *The Wit's Miscellany*. I have seen the notice; but this may have been thought too pretentious, and it was determined to have one of a more neutral kind, viz. *Bentley's*, which suggested a truly witty retort by Barham. The publisher had told him of the change: "Instead of *The Wit's Miscellany*, I have determined to call it *Bentley's*." "Would not that be going to *the other extreme?*" was Barham's sly remark.

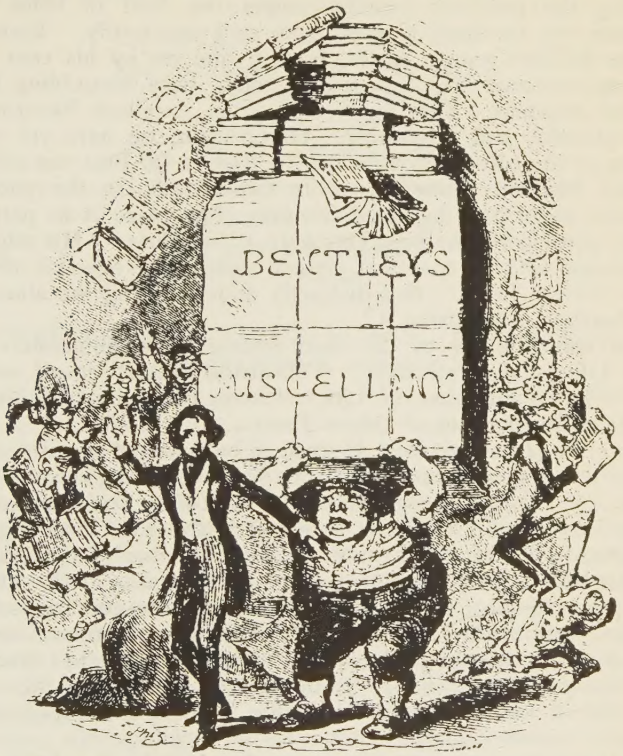
Boz, at that time in the best of health and spirits, shrank from no labour or burden. He had nearly a dozen numbers of *Pickwick* to write, the magazine to edit, papers to contribute, and one of his great stories, *Oliver Twist*, to furnish for the second number. In his first number the young editor gathered quite a brilliant company round him. "Father Prout," Dr. Maginn, Theodore Hook, Samuel Lover, Gleig, Fenimore Cooper, Haynes Bailey, the authors of *Hadji Baba* and of *Headlong Hall*. There were some oddities—as Father Prout appeared no less than three times in different parts of the magazine. The editor supplied "The Public Life of Mr. Tulrumble," an account of a provincial mayor—evidently intended for one of the *Sketches by Boz*. Voluntary contributions were considered, for a notice from the editor tells us that "numerous contributions have been received. Some are under consideration: and to the authors of the remainder, communications have been addressed by the editor, who begs to state that in future he cannot return rejected articles."

In his Prologue Boz seems to have felt the awkwardness of the change of title and the smart of the jest, for he quotes the old joke about Swift and the youth who "set up for a wit": "Then, sir, I advise you to sit down again." He urged that it could not apply to him. "The fact is absolutely undeniable that we originally advertised ourselves—or rather our work—as *The Wit's Miscellany*, thereby indicating beyond all doubt that we were Wits."

On 1 June the magazine contained the following highly personal notice: "Since the appearance of the last number of this work the editor has to mourn the sudden death of a very dear young relative to whom he was most affectionately attached, and whose society had been for a long time the chief solace of his labours. He has been compelled to seek a short interval of rest and quiet. The next number will be conducted by him as usual, and the adventures of Oliver Twist will

then be continued." And in the literary intelligence we read: "*Oliver Twist.* We beg to announce that the 'Adventures of the Parish Boy,' under the above title, will be continued in our next *Miscellany.* The melancholy domestic affliction which Mr. Dickens has just sustained prevented the possibility of any mental exertion for the present number."

All through his life Boz was very partial to this mode of address, and loved to write a letter, as it were, to the public, and take them into his confidence. "Addresses," "Proclamations," "Personals," "Protests,"



PUBLISHING DAY OF "BENTLEY'S MISCELLANY," 1837, WITH PORTRAIT OF CHARLES DICKENS
Drawn by Hablot K. Browne

were very constantly issued. I believe this practice was owing to his highly strung, sensitive nature, which could not rest for a day or a week without expending itself in this fashion.

In the third number we find a contributor, George Hogarth, introduced, who was Boz's father-in-law. His subject was a passage in the life of Beaumarchais. I have often wondered did Scott and Boz ever meet—they might have met—but here at least was a sort of connexion. In Scott's entanglement with the Ballantynes and his publishers he obtained great assistance from a shrewd young writer to the signet, in fact from this very George Hogarth. Scott mentions him with great

praise for his assistance. It is true that Scott died in 1833 and Dickens was not married until 1836—but Hogarth's son-in-law may have met him in Edinburgh, and have learned from him the whole story of Scott's troubles.

The second number was notable for a very pleasant *jeu d'esprit* in Boz's happiest style. It was a leaflet bound up with the number—a lively parody of the speech from the throne at the opening of Parliament. At the head was a charmingly engraved picture by Phiz, depicting the publisher bending under the load of bales of his magazine—an excellent likeness, too, as I can testify. Beside him was the brilliant young editor, leading him on by his coat collar; while an animated crowd surrounds them, busy scrambling for the scattered numbers. This figure also is an excellent likeness, well-made, graceful, and interesting. Here, again, we have yet another instance of the editor's thought for his friends, for Phiz was still working with him on *Pickwick;* while Cruikshank, as the publisher's bondman, might have expected the job. The piece is in parts witty enough, particularly the ingenious note at the close: "His mightiness incorporated with his speech on general topics some especial references to one 'Oliver Twist.' Not distinctly understanding the allusion we have abstained from giving it."

Boz's contributions to the first volume were numerous: "The Public Life of Mr. Tulrumble," "Theatrical Advertisement extraordinary," "The Pantomime of Life," "Some Particulars Concerning a Lion," and five portions of *Oliver Twist.*

Oliver Twist was, however, destined to be a second time interrupted, but for less tragical reasons, viz. in September, 1838. Also in the number for 1 October, 1837, there was no *Oliver Twist*, and a rather odd apology accounted for its absence: "Notice. *Oliver Twist* will be continued by Mr. Dickens in the next number of the *Miscellany* and after that time from month to month as usual. The great length of the proceedings of the Mudfog Association prevents the insertion of the usual continuation this month." This seems extraordinary. To suspend an exciting story, which every one was reading, to introduce an ephemeral paper, was surely "bad business" and risky. They might think that it was broken off altogether. These interruptions might have done serious damage.

We find in Part II an illustration to Ingoldsby's tale of *The Spectre of Tappington*, representing the skeleton's appearance, and on a boot-jack the name of the artist, "W. Buss." This was our old friend who is so interesting to Pickwickians as the author of the two discarded "Buss plates." As is known, he was dismissed rather summarily, as a failure. But I fancy we can see here a trait of Boz's good nature, who wished to make a little *amende.* But the picture is a wretched one and no more of his work appears. Poor Buss! One feels a sympathy for him. In the third number appeared an impromptu that is often quoted, and has merit:—

Who the Dickens Boz could be
Puzzled many a learned elf,
Till time unveiled the mystery
And Boz appeared as Dickens' self.

C. J. DAVIES.

Smart as this is, it was hardly "the thing" for the editor to insert, and I am inclined to fancy it was the publisher who had it done. Boz never puffed himself. Who this C. J. Davies was we cannot tell.

All this time the energetic Bentley clung to a promised but still unwritten story by his editor, which he used to announce every now and then. At last, on the end cover of the number for November, 1838, he was able to display a large notice, filling the whole page, and printed in thick black letters :—

THE READERS OF
BENTLEY'S MISCELLANY
ARE INFORMED THAT IMMEDIATELY
ON THE COMPLETION OF
"OLIVER TWIST,"
MR. CHARLES DICKENS (BOZ),
WILL COMMENCE A NEW STORY, TO BE ENTITLED
"BARNABY RUDGE,"
IN THIS PUBLICATION.
(*To be concluded*)

ONE OF DICKENS'S PUBLIC READINGS

By FRANCES E. SEAMAN

I ONCE had the privilege of hearing Dickens read selections from his works. This was a year or two before his death, when he was giving a series of Readings at St. James's Hall.

On the evening I was present his urbanity and tact were exhibited in a marked manner. He had just commenced the first half of his programme (which was a selection from the life of little Paul Dombey), when an angry discussion in the body of the hall interrupted the progress of the reading. This was occasioned by a late comer in the audience, who was accompanied by some ladies, who in a stentorian voice announced that he had booked and paid for his seats, and was determined to have them notwithstanding their occupation by other persons who had arrived before him. "By all means," said Dickens, "let the gentleman have his seats, or the best that can be offered in substitution, with apologies for the mistake that has arisen. I shall not continue my reading till this is done." The courteous manner of this speech seemed to completely mollify the rather irascible individual in the audience (though one must concede that he had right on his side), and order was restored in a few moments.

The second half of the programme that evening was devoted to the side-splitting account of Bob Sawyer's party. I may mention that while the gifted author did the fullest justice to the deep pathos of several of the scenes in the life of Paul Dombey, especially in the description of his death, causing tears to flow from the audience, he was not quite so happy in describing the rollicking fun and humorous accompaniments of the immortal medical student's reception of Mr. Pickwick and his other visitors on that memorable occasion.

Dickens was in failing health at the time, which possibly accounted for the absence from the tones of his voice of the extreme fun which the words and scene convey.

PET PRISONERS*

By CHARLES DICKENS

CHAPTER I

THE system of separate confinement first experimented on in England at the model prison, Pentonville, London, and now spreading through the country, appears to us to require a little calm consideration and reflection on the part of the public. We purpose, in this paper, to suggest what we consider some grave objections to this system.

We shall do this temperately, and without considering it necessary to regard every one from whom we differ, as a scoundrel, actuated by base motives, to whom the most unprincipled conduct may be recklessly attributed. Our faith in most questions where the good men are represented to be all *pro*, and the bad men to be all *con*, is very small. There is a hot class of riders of hobby-horses in the field, in this century, who think they do nothing unless they make a steeple-chase of their object, throw a vast quantity of mud about, and spurn every sort of decent restraint and reasonable consideration under their horses' heels. This question has not escaped such championship. It has its steeple-chase riders, who hold the dangerous principle that the end justifies any means, and to whom no means, truth and fair-dealing usually excepted, come amiss.

Considering the separate system of imprisonment, here, solely in reference to England, we discard, for the purpose of this discussion, the objection founded on its extreme severity, which would immediately arise if we were considering it with any reference to the State of Pennsylvania in America. For whereas in that State it may be inflicted for a dozen years, the idea is quite abandoned at home of extending it usually, beyond a dozen months, or in any case beyond eighteen months. Besides which, the school and the chapel afford periods of comparative relief here, which are not afforded in America.

Though it has been represented by the steeple-chase riders as a most enormous heresy to contemplate the possibility of any prisoner going mad or idiotic, under the prolonged effects of separate confinement; and although any one who should have the temerity to maintain such a doubt in Pennsylvania would have a chance of becoming a profane St. Stephen; Lord Grey, in his very last speech in the House of Lords on this subject, made in the present session of Parliament, in praise of this separate system, said of it: "Wherever it has been fairly tried, one of its great defects has been discovered to be this,—that it cannot be continued for a sufficient length of time without danger to the individual, and that human nature cannot bear it beyond a limited period. The evidence of medical authorities proves beyond dispute that, if it is protracted beyond twelve months, the health of the convict, mental and physical, would require the most close and vigilant superintendence. Eighteen months is stated to be the *maximum* time for the continuance of its infliction, and, as a general rule, it is advised that it never be continued for more than twelve months." This being conceded,

* Identified and reprinted for the first time from *Household Words*, 27 April, 1850.

and it being clear that the prisoner's mind, and all the apprehensions weighing upon it, must be influenced from the first hour of his imprisonment by the greater or less extent of its duration in perspective before him, we are content to regard the system as dissociated in England from the American objection of too great severity.

We shall consider it, first in the relation of the extraordinary contrast it presents, in a country circumstanced as England is, between the physical condition of the convict in prison, and that of the hard-working man outside, or the pauper outside. We shall then enquire, and endeavour to lay before our readers some means of judging, whether its proved or probable efficiency in producing a real, trustworthy, practically repentant state of mind, is such as to justify the presentation of that extraordinary contrast. If, in the end, we indicate the conclusion that the associated silent system is less objectionable, it is not because we consider it in the abstract a good secondary punishment, but because it is a severe one, capable of judicious administration, much less expensive, not presenting the objectionable contrast so strongly, and not calculated to pet and pamper the mind of the prisoner and swell his sense of his own importance. We are not acquainted with any system of secondary punishment that we think reformatory, except the mark system of Captain Macconnochie, formerly governor of Norfolk Island, which proceeds upon the principle of obliging the convict to some exercise of self-denial and resolution in every act of his prison life, and which would condemn him to a sentence of so much labour and good conduct, instead of so much time. There are details in Captain Macconnochie's scheme on which we have our doubts (rigid silence we consider indispensable); but, in the main, we regard it as embodying sound and wise principles. We infer from the writings of Archbishop Whateley, that those principles have presented themselves to his profound and acute mind in a similar light.

We will first contrast the dietary of The Model Prison at Pentonville, with the dietary of what we take to be the nearest workhouse, namely, that of Saint Pancras. In the prison, every man receives twenty-eight ounces of meat weekly. In the workhouse, every able-bodied adult receives eighteen. In the prison, every man receives one hundred and forty ounces of bread weekly. In the workhouse, every able-bodied adult receives ninety-six. In the prison, every man receives one hundred and twelve ounces of potatoes weekly. In the workhouse, every able-bodied adult receives thirty-six. In the prison, every man receives five pints and a quarter of liquid cocoa weekly, (made of flaked cocoa or cocoa-nibs), with fourteen ounces of milk and forty-two drams of molasses; also seven pints of gruel weekly, sweetened with forty-two drams of molasses. In the workhouse, every able-bodied adult receives fourteen pints and a half of milk-porridge weekly, and no cocoa, and no gruel. In the prison, every man receives three pints and a half of soup weekly. In the workhouse, every able-bodied adult male receives four pints and a half, and a pint of Irish stew. This, with seven pints of table-beer weekly, and six ounces of cheese, is all the man in the workhouse has to set off against the immensely superior advantages of the prisoner in all the other respects we have

stated. His lodging is very inferior to the prisoner's, the costly nature of whose accommodation we shall presently show.

Let us reflect upon this contrast in another aspect. We beg the reader to glance once more at the Model Prison dietary, and consider its frightful disproportion to the dietary of the free labourer in any of the rural parts of England. What shall we take his wages at? Will twelve shillings a week do? It cannot be called a low average, at all events. Twelve shillings a week make thirty-one pounds four a year. The cost, in 1848, for the victualling and management of every prisoner in the Model Prison was within a little of thirty-six pounds. Consequently, that free labourer, with young children to support, with cottage-rent to pay, and clothes to buy, and no advantage of purchasing his food in large amounts by contract, has, for the whole subsistence of himself and family, between four and five pounds a year *less* than the cost of feeding and overlooking one man in the Model Prison. Surely to his enlightened mind, and sometimes low morality, this must be an extraordinary good reason for keeping out of it!

But we will not confine ourselves to the contrast between the labourer's scanty fare and the prisoner's "flaked cocoa or cocoa-nibs," and daily dinner of soup, meat, and potatoes. We will rise a little higher in the scale. Let us see what advertisers in the *Times* newspaper can board the middle classes at, and get a profit out of, too.

A LADY, residing in a cottage, with a large garden, in a pleasant and healthful locality, would be happy to receive one or two LADIES to board with her. Two ladies occupying the same apartment may be accommodated for 12s. a week each. The cottage is within a quarter of an hour's walk of a good market town, ten minutes of a South-Western Railway Station, and an hour's distance from town.

These two ladies could not be so cheaply boarded in the Model Prison.

BOARD and RESIDENCE, at £70 per annum, for a married couple, or in proportion for a single gentleman or lady, with a respectable family. Rooms large and airy, in an eligible dwelling, at Islington, about twenty minutes' walk from the Bank. Dinner hour six o'clock. There are one or two vacancies to complete a small, cheerful, and agreeable circle.

Still cheaper than the Model Prison!

BOARD and RESIDENCE.—A lady, keeping a select school, in a town, about 30 miles from London, would be happy to meet with a LADY to BOARD and RESIDE with her. She would have her own bed-room and sitting-room. Any lady wishing for accomplishments would find this desirable. Terms £30 per annum. References will be expected and given.

Again, some six pounds a year less than the Model Prison! And if we were to pursue the contrast through the newspaper file for a month, or through the advertising pages of two or three numbers of Bradshaw's Railway Guide, we might probably fill the present number of this publication with similar examples, many of them including a decent education into the bargain.

This Model Prison had cost at the close of 1847, under the heads of "building" and "repairs" alone, the insignificant sum of ninety-three thousand pounds—within seven thousand pounds of the amount of the last Government grant for the Education of the whole people, and enough to pay for the emigration to Australia of four thousand, six hundred and fifty poor persons at twenty pounds per head. Upon the work

done by five hundred prisoners in the Model Prison, in the year 1848, (we collate these figures from the Reports, and from Mr. Hepworth Dixon's useful work on the London Prisons,) there was no profit, but an actual loss of upwards of eight hundred pounds. The cost of instruction, and the time occupied in instruction, when the labour is necessarily unskilled and unproductive, may be pleaded in explanation of this astonishing fact. We are ready to allow all due weight to such considerations, but we put it to our readers whether the whole system is right or wrong; whether the money ought or ought not rather to be spent in instructing the unskilled and neglected outside the prison walls. It will be urged that it is expended in preparing the convict for the exile to which he is doomed. We submit to our readers, who are the jury in this case, that all this should be done outside the prison, first; that the first persons to be prepared for emigration are the miserable children who are consigned to the tender mercies of a Drouet, or who disgrace our streets; and that in this beginning at the wrong end, a spectacle of monstrous inconsistency is presented, shocking to the mind. Where is our Model House of Youthful Industry, where is our Model Ragged School, costing for building and repairs, from ninety to a hundred thousand pounds, and for its annual maintenance upwards of twenty thousand pounds a year? Would it be a Christian act to build that, first? To breed our skilful labour there? To take the hewers of wood and drawers of water in a strange country from the convict ranks, until those men by earnest working, zeal, and perseverance, proved themselves, and raised themselves? Here are two sets of people in a densely populated land, always in the balance before the general eye. Is Crime for ever to carry it against Poverty, and to have a manifest advantage? There are the scales before all men. Whirlwinds of dust scattered in men's eyes—and there is plenty flying about—cannot blind them to the real state of the balance.

(*To be continued*)

THE BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS

By J. W. T. LEY

IT was only a very few months ago that in these pages I described the death of John L. Toole as the snapping of another link in the gradually shortening chain which connects this generation with that that knew Charles Dickens. And now, in the beginning of the New Year, we have to record the snapping of yet another link by the death of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, who was one of Dickens's most valued friends, for whom he always expressed the highest esteem.

The earliest mention of her in Forster's *Life of Dickens* refers to the year 1840. In October of that year he returned from Broadstairs, and, says Forster, "we resumed our almost daily ridings, foregatherings with Maclise at Hampstead and elsewhere, and social entertainments with Macready, Talfourd, Procter, Stanfield, Fonblanque, Elliotson, Tennent, d'Orsay, Quin, Harness, Wilkie, Edwin Landseer, Rogers, Sydney Smith, and Bulwer. . . . Other friends became familiar in later

years; but, disinclined as he was to the dinner invitations that reached him from every quarter, all such meetings with those whom I have named, and in an especial manner the marked attentions shown him by Miss Coutts, which began with the very beginning of his career, were invariably welcome."

Exactly when their lifelong friendship commenced does not seem to be discoverable, but evidently it was when Dickens was a very young man indeed, for at that date just mentioned he was only twenty-eight years old, and even earlier than this he seems to have been a frequent guest at the table of Sir Francis Burdett, father of the future Baroness. The onslaughts on the Poor Law contained in *Oliver Twist* gained the approval of the great banker, and while the novel was still incomplete, he gave the young novelist very real pleasure by referring to him in a speech at Birmingham, and speaking approvingly of his advocacy of the cause of the poor.

The friendship between Miss Coutts and the novelist never slackened to the end of his life, and many were the kindnesses that he and his family received at her hands. In 1846 she offered to take charge of his eldest son's education, and the boy was sent to King's College. This son seems to have been an especial favourite of hers, and in addition to educating him she sent him presents innumerable. For years he received from her regularly a Twelfth Cake, and in 1845 Dickens, writing to Forster from Genoa, said: "Miss Coutts has sent Charley, with the best of letters to me, a Twelfth Cake weighing ninety pounds, magnificently decorated; and only think of the characters, Fairburn's Twelfth Night characters, being detained at custom-house for Jesuitical surveillance! But these fellows are—— Well, never mind." Another son—Walter Savage Landor—experienced marked kindnesses, and in 1856 he received a cadetship in the 26th Native (India) Infantry Regiment through the medium of this kindly lady. Of other evidences of her true friendship for the novelist's family it is not necessary to speak. Of Dickens's regard for her there is no question. In September, 1843, he wrote of her: "She is a most excellent creature, I protest to God, and I have a most perfect affection and respect for her"; and when *Martin Chuzzlewit*, which was then appearing as a serial, was published as a volume, it was dedicated to her "with the true and earnest regard of the author."

But her kindness to his family was not the sole cause by any means of Dickens's respect and admiration for Miss Coutts. "Munificent as her kindness (to his family) was, however, it was yet," says Forster, "only the smallest part of the obligation which Dickens felt that he owed this lady; to whose generous schemes for the neglected and uncared-for classes of the population, in all which he deeply sympathized, he did the very utmost to render, through many years, unstinted service of time and labour, with sacrifices unselfish as her own." The full extent of those services cannot be told now—probably will never be known; but we do know that in many of her schemes for the assistance of the poor and wretched Dickens was at her right hand, and was her most valued and trusted adviser and assistant. It was he who introduced her to the slums of London, taking her into the wretchedest parts of the richest city in the world, and showing her the misery and

wickedness among which so many of our "fellow travellers to the grave" are doomed to pursue their journey. Of all the works in which they were associated the best known is the Ragged Schools. On 24 September, 1843, Dickens wrote to Forster—"I sent Miss Coutts a sledge-hammer account of the ragged schools; and as I saw her name for two hundred pounds in the Clergy Education subscription list, took pains to show her that religious mysteries and difficult creeds wouldn't do for such pupils. I told her, too, that it was of immense importance they should be *washed*. She writes back to know what the rent of some large airy premises would be, and what the expense of erecting a regular bathing or purifying place; touching which points I am in correspondence with the authorities. I have no doubt she will do whatever I ask her in the matter." It was, too, as a result of her visits to the East End of London with Dickens that Miss Coutts blotted out one of the worst plague-spots of London — Nova Scotia Gardens, Bethnal Green, and erected the Columbia Square Buildings, the first model dwellings in the metropolis. To recount all the good works in which the novelist assisted and advised this good woman, would take more space—even if they were all known —than the pages of *The Dickensian* could afford.

THE BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS AS SHE WAS IN 1866
Reproduced by permission of *The Gentlewoman*

Only one more need be mentioned, the home for fallen women at Shepherd's Bush, which was founded in the hope of rescuing such women by preparing them for emigration. Dickens took up the work whole-heartedly, and wrote an appeal to these women which was printed as a pamphlet and given away in the streets. Indeed, the whole of this work was carried through by Dickens acting for Miss Coutts, and Forster tells us that it largely and regularly occupied his time for several years.

SHAKESPEARE AND DICKENS AS MEN OF AFFAIRS

By the Rev. W. A. C. CHEVALIER
AUTHOR OF "DICKENS AND CHRISTIANITY"

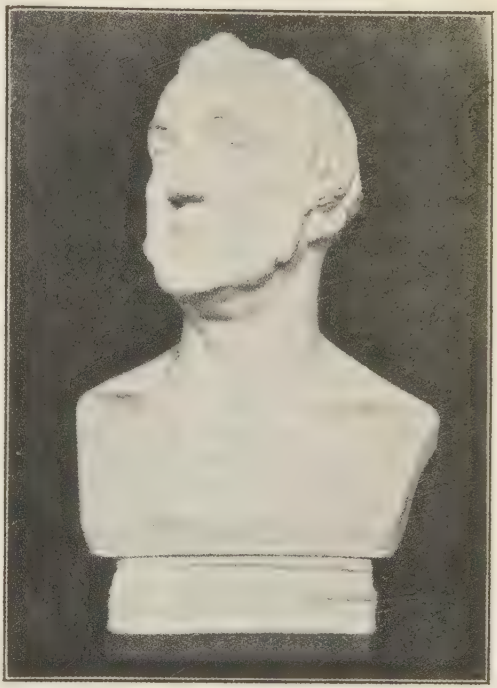
I

IT is a well-known fact by all who knew Charles Dickens, that he was a good man of business, that he refuted in his character and practice the conventional idea of an author as a careless man of affairs. But I wonder how many have noticed that in this respect Dickens was a parallel of Shakespeare, and moreover that John Shakespeare the father of the poet and John Dickens the father of the novelist were also parallels.

It is a curious coincidence and one of great interest in connexion with two such masters of thought and fancy. It is a subject that would have found a place in the *Curiosities of Literature* if Isaac Disraeli had known the life and career of Charles Dickens, as no doubt he knew those of Shakespeare. The two epithets which those who knew Shakespeare habitually applied to him were "gentle" and "honest." They unite in describing him as of an open and free, a frank and generous disposition. The epithet "gentle" may be understood to represent the innate courtesy and kind consideration for the feelings of others which belong to gentle birth, but are by no means confined to it. The epithet "honest," which in the usage of the time meant honourable, may be taken to express that spirit of honour and self-respect which carefully regards the just claims and rights of others. One point which Shakespeare seems to have faithfully observed is the cardinal maxim as to exactness in money matters—not lightly to incur pecuniary obligations, and if incurred to meet them with scrupulous precision. This he could not have learnt from his father, who, though an honest man, was too eager and careless to be particular on the point. Indeed, carelessness in money matters seems rather to have belonged to the family of Shakespeare, the poet's uncle Henry having been often in the courts for debt, and, as we know, it was true of his father also. Yet John Shakespeare was a warm-hearted, lovable man who carried the affection and sympathy of his family with him through all his troubles and indiscretions.

How all this coincides with what we know of the characteristics of our own Charles Dickens and his father. What a perfect parallel in these respects was John Shakespeare with John Dickens. "I know my father," said Dickens, "to be as kind-hearted and generous a man as ever lived in the world. Everything that I can remember of his conduct to his wife or children or friends, in sickness or affliction, is beyond all praise. By me as a sick child he has watched night and day unweariedly and patiently, many nights and days. He never undertook any business charge or trust that he did not sedulously, conscientiously, punctually, honourably discharge. His industry has always been untiring." How it came that, being what he was, John Dickens was so unfortunate in his financial affairs and so often in "money involvements," may perhaps be chiefly ascribed to his amiable ease of temper or decided optimism. He took it too much

for granted that things would go or come right. It was an amiable weakness, and interprets a little too literally the Christian precepts: "Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself"; "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Hence the earliest impressions received and retained by Charles Dickens were of his father's pecuniary difficulties, and how he first heard of that crisis in his father's affairs called "the deed," which is ascribed in *David Copperfield* to Mr. Micawber. In later days he knew that it meant a composition with creditors; and that it ended in his father's arrest, his being carried to the Marshalsea, with those ominous, pathetic words that "the sun was set upon him for ever."



JOHN DICKENS, THE FATHER OF THE NOVELIST
From a photograph by Mr. T. W. Tyrrell of the bust by Samuel Haydon

How like is this to the character and experience of John Shakespeare. It seems clear that, notwithstanding his intelligence, good nature, and activity, there was some defect of character in the poet's father which gave instability to his career. The precise nature of the defect cannot be determined; but it seems to have been a want of measure and balance of adequate foresight in his business dealings. Even in his early years at Stratford there are signs of a too ardent, impatient, somewhat unheedful temper. As an illustration of his want of method and system, we find that in the year 1556 he allowed himself to be sued for quite small debts, which could not have arisen from want of means, as during the same year he made the purchase of two houses with large gardens. On another occasion he was fined twelve pence, equal to eight or ten shillings of our money now—for not removing a dust and refuse heap accumulated in front of his own door.

Imprudence was perhaps the worst trait in John Shakespeare's character. He was a man of energy, ambition, and public spirit; but these qualities were not under control, as is shown in the number and

variety of occupations which he added to his trade of glover and leather dealer, until he had included almost the whole circle of agricultural products within his grasp. Moreover his strong social feeling and love of pleasure were disturbing forces in the ground notes of his character, and helped to introduce a scale of lavish outlay which would hasten the financial collapse in his affairs that followed. And on finding things going against him, John Shakespeare was just the man to discount his available resources, mortgage his future, and adopt any expedient for maintaining the post of his present position.

How different in all this was the son, who, like the son of John Dickens, not only made his father's name famous, but was the means of restoring his alienated estate and recovering his lost position. John Shakespeare died in 1601, having through the affectionate care of his son spent the last years of his life in the ease and comfort befitting one who had been chief alderman and mayor of Stratford.

John Dickens died in 1851, the last twelve years of his chequered life being made easy and comfortable by the thoughtful care of his already famous son, who in 1839 had provided a pleasant home for his mother and father in the beautiful county of Devon. "I am sure they may be happy there," wrote Dickens on 5 March of that year to his friend Forster; "for if I were older, and my course of activity were run, I am sure I could, with God's blessing, for many and many a year."

The memorial placed over John Dickens by that son who had made his name famous bore tribute to his "zealous, useful, cheerful spirit."

There can be no doubt that in the case of Dickens, as in that of Shakespeare, the son benefited by the experience of the father and learned many practical lessons therefrom. While Shakespeare's father was often prosecuted for debt, no trace of any such action against the poet himself has been discovered. The family troubles must have very early developed and strengthened the high feeling of honour and also of prudence on this point. He must have taken to heart the lesson his father's imprudence could hardly fail to impress on a mind so large and reflective. This helps to explain what has often excited surprise as to his future career—his business industry, financial skill, and steady progress to worldly success. Few things are more remarkable in Shakespeare's personal history than the resolute spirit of independence he seems to have displayed from the moment he left his straitened home to seek his fortune in the world to the time when he returned to live at Stratford as a man of wealth and position. Chettle's contemporary testimony to Shakespeare's character during his first years in London is decisive on this head: "Because myself have seen his demeanour, no less civil than he, excellent in the qualities he professes; besides divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, which approves his art." Every word of which encomium might have been written of Dickens, who in this, as in other respects, is a modern parallel of the great poet. Thomas Carlyle, in a letter to John Forster on his biography, writing of Dickens, speaks of "his bright and joyful sympathy with everything around him; his steady practicality withal; the singularly solid business talent he continually had." Referring to an agreement with Mr. Bentley in 1837 of which he had no copy,

Dickens writes to Forster: "You will tell me you are very much surprised at my doing business in this way. So am I, for in most matters of labour and application I am punctuality itself." His business capacity and method appeared in his literary work as well as in practical affairs. "Whatever he knows or feels is always at his fingers' ends, and is present through whatever he is doing." What Rebecca says to Ivanhoe of the Black Knight's mode of fighting would not be inapplicable to Dickens's manner of writing: "There is more than mere strength, there seems as if the whole soul and spirit of the champion were given to every blow he deals." His preparation too for the exercise of his craft was always careful, thorough, and workmanlike.

He entered his name among the students at the Inn of the Middle Temple, though he did not eat dinners there until many years later. He made a circuit of nearly all the London prisons, and came into contact with the prisoners accompanied by Mr. Hablot Browne, his illustrator, that his realism might be the more complete. There seemed to be little to add to our knowledge of London until his books came upon us, but each in this respect outstripped the other in its marvels. In *Nicholas Nickleby* "the old city reappears under every aspect; and whether light and warmth are playing over it, or the veil is uplifted from its darker scenes, we see and feel it as it actually is." Dickens's practical humanity was a great factor in his literary projects and labours. "Before the Christmas of 1837 was over," says Forster, "he went down into Yorkshire with Mr. Hablot Browne to look up the cheap schools in that county, to which public attention had been drawn by a law case, and which had before been notorious for cruelties committed in them, of which he had heard as early as his childish days; and which he was bent upon destroying if he could."

SOME DICKENS CHARACTERS
From the cover design of Kitton's *Life of Dickens*

(To be continued)

THE ART OF GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

A CONTEMPORARY OPINION

THE drawings of George Cruikshank and Phiz having been adversely criticized within our pages recently, it will be of interest to our readers to hear what was thought of the work of the former by one of the leading Reviews in 1839. *Oliver Twist* was published in three volumes in 1838, and a long article upon it in *The Quarterly Review* was concluded as follows:—

"It is hardly fair to conclude an article, however brief and desultory, upon *Oliver Twist*, without making some allusion to the obligations under which author and reader are laid by the graphic running commentary of Mr. Cruikshank's etchings. This, we suspect, may be as great an artist in his own way as Boz himself—and it is difficult to say, on laying down the book, how much of the powerful impression we are conscious of may be due, not to the pen, but to the pencil. Long before Boz was heard of, George Cruikshank had captured a snug niche in the temple of fame—one far more secure than ninety-nine Royal Academicians in a hundred ever get possession of—by his bold, sprightly delineations of folly, both smirking and solemn. The easy play of his humorous fancy was as universally felt as the exquisite nicety of his observation of low and grotesque realities. But it was reserved for Boz to guess that so great a master of fun—with an eye so true to fact, combining so much of the genuine *vis creatrix*—must, in all likelihood, be capable of doing justice to conceptions of the dark and fearful order, as well as to the extravagances of human absurdity. His Bumble's Courtship, his Fagin's Crib, etc., might have been anticipated—his Sikes attempting to Murder the Dog, and his Jew in the Condemned Cell, have amply justified the novelist's shrewd prognostication, and proved a range of power perhaps unrivalled since Hogarth. We are really surprised that such judges as Wilkie, Landseer, Leslie, Allan, etc., have not ere now insisted on breaking through all puny laws, and giving this man of undoubted genius his diploma. Monsieur Scribe is in the Institute—let not the example be in vain." *

"NICHOLAS NICKLEBY" AT WHITEFIELDS

IN the winter season we always hear, and with pleasure too, of Mr. Harry Gaze. He makes a point, annually, of dealing in one guise or another with a popular work of Charles Dickens. This year *Nicholas Nickleby* came under his special care, and a delightful entertainment he made of it; all the actors performing their several parts in a manner to meet much appreciation. A crowded audience of some seven hundred people, presided over by the Rev. C. Silvester Horne, heartily welcomed *Nicholas*, and the evening's pleasure closed with a performance of *The Cricket on the Hearth*. Whitefields is indeed fortunate to number Mr. Harry Gaze amongst its many workers.

* Extract from *The Quarterly Review*, June, 1839. Article iv., Oliver Twist, or the Parish Boy's Progress. By Boz. 3 vols. London, 1839.

DICKENS AND GRAVESEND

LAST year at the first meeting of the Gravesend Branch of the Fellowship some discussion took place as to which was the house wherein Dickens spent his honeymoon, and the matter was referred to on page 87 of our last volume. The question is dealt with again by Mr. Alex. J. Philip in his book on Gravesend,* just issued. He devotes a chapter to "Boz and the Town," and in it sets out the facts regarding this house. Every Dickensian knows well the house at the corner of Thong Lane, which has always been accepted as the right one. But it is now claimed that a cottage on the opposite side of the road is the

THE HOUSE AT CHALK
Now claimed to be the one Dickens spent his honeymoon in

one Dickens actually rented in 1836 after his marriage. The landlady's name was Mrs. Craddock, and it is curious to note that Dickens, who at the time was writing his *Posthumous Papers*, lodged Mr. Pickwick with a Mrs. Craddock when he took him to Bath. This of course may be merely a coincidence. It would be interesting to have the matter settled definitely if possible, for the important reason that, whichever is the right house, a part of *Pickwick Papers* was written within its four walls. We are able to give here, by the courtesy of The Homeland Association, a picture of the house in question.

In the same chapter Mr. Philip advances good reasons for accepting Gravesend as the original of Muggleton, and speaks of Joe Gargery's forge being at Chalk, and not at Cooling. Not only this chapter, but the whole book itself is full of valuable reading, and is thoroughly and well illustrated. Altogether a notable guide book.

* *Gravesend: The Water Gate of London*, by Alex. J. Philip. London: The Homeland Association, Ltd.

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

XXVI

A SONNET

AS glistening rain refresheth thirsty earth,
As dew brings sweeter life unto the flowers,
So, unto hosts of lives, thy varied powers
Have given to heart and mind a better birth.
When Moses touched the rock in the old day,
Lo! welcome streams most genially fell;
So doth thy pen delightfully compel
The hardest heart to yield unto thy sway.
Thy themes, as poet, chiefly hope and love,
Thy aim, the happy good of all thy race;
Thy power to mirth and sorrow both can move,
Can smooth our journey to that Higher Place.
Thou master of most pleasant humour—wit,
Thine is the largest heart mind ever writ!

The Examiner, 1854.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

THE Guild is arranging a dance and social gathering to be held at St. Bride's Institute, Fleet Street, during April, probably on the 25th, the profits of which will as usual augment the funds of the Guild. Tickets will be 2s. each, to include refreshments These will shortly be ready, and should be applied for as early as possible. Several members, both at home and abroad, have lately sent generous monetary assistance to the funds, and supplies of garments to the clothing store. All are greatly appreciated, and the Hon. Secretary offers hearty thanks to those who are thus enabling more substantial help to be given to some of the more serious cases. There are still a number of Guild subscriptions overdue. Miss Miniken will be glad to receive them, and would again point out that letters to her should be addressed to headquarters, not to St. Bride's Institute. The latter is only the address to which parcels should be forwarded.

Needlework and Charitable Guild.

THE members of this Branch met at Steine House on Saturday, 19 January, 1907, when the evening was devoted to a consideration of the novel *Our Mutual Friend*. The President, Mr. Henry Davey, occupied the chair and opened the proceedings by a most interesting dissertation on the object of the book, the circumstances under which it was written, and a general description of the principal characters. Mr. Davey described the progress of the plot, and at appropriate intervals readings and recitations were given by Miss Marjorie Smith, Miss Ada G. Goring, Mr. Davey, and Mr. W. Adams, who one and all acquitted themselves admirably, and by their entertaining elocution showed a keen sense of the importance of the novel and depicted the various scenes of humour and pathos in excellent style. The next meeting is on 9 February, and being the annual celebration of Dickens's birthday will take the form of a social evening.

Brighton.

THE evening's programme on 14 January, arranged by Mr. R. J. Block, included a reading given by that gentleman, in two sections, from the Christmas number of *All the Year Round*, 1862—"Somebody's Luggage." The story selected was the tale of "Monsieur l'Anglais," as found in "His Boots," and the reader treated the subject with appropriate force and pathos. The interval was enlivened by a performance

Brixton.

on the Japanese violin by Mr. E. W. Smith, which was followed by a short recitation given by his daughter.

Edinburgh and Leith.

ON 20 December, in the Oak Hall, Edinburgh Café, Mr. R. C. H. Morison, Hon. Vice-President, gave a Christmas recital. The hall was crowded, and Mr. Morison's recitations were much enjoyed. Occupying as he does a front place in the ranks of social artistes, Mr. Morison's name alone was sufficient to ensure the success of the meeting, and he was ably assisted by Miss Madge Craigie, Miss Edith C. Mackenzie, Dr. Drinkwater, and Mr. T. W. Wright, all the artistes being repeatedly encored.

Another meeting was held on the evening of 10 January in 5 St. Andrew Square, at which papers were read by Miss Black on the subject of "Ruth and Tom Pinch," and Miss J. J. Stevenson on "Dickens in Edinburgh," both of which were much enjoyed. They were followed by an interesting discussion on the character of Pecksniff, in which the President, Messrs. Alex. Eddington, D. W. Gunn, A. Howie, and Miss Anderson took part.

Hastings and St. Leonards.

AT the Queen's Hotel, on 10 December, a very enjoyable concert was given in aid of the local Charity Organization Society. Mr. H. C. Willmott presided over a large audience, who, judging by their applause, greatly appreciated the excellent vocal and musical programme presented, in which Miss Ethel Dixon, Miss Sarah Hendy, Mr. J. A. Gallop, Mr. G. W. N. Day, Miss Effie Ingram, and Mr. H. B. Carter took part. The Dickensian element was provided by Miss Maud Tyler, who gave a capital reading of "Mrs. Pardiggle District Visiting" from *Bleak House*, Mrs. Alf. Cruttenden, who recited "The Death of Paul Dombey" from *Dombey and Son*, and Mr. Bert Forss, who gave several of his clever impersonations of characters from the works of Dickens.

There was a delightful social party at the same place, on 7 January, under the auspices of the Branch, and a pleasant time was passed. Upwards of sixty members of the Fellowship attended in character costume, and some excellent representations were seen. The members seemed to hit the chosen character exactly, and the assembly of Dickens admirers, as representing the popular novelist's characters, provided a spectacle of extreme interest. The event was a great social success. Upon entering the hall each character was introduced by Sam Weller (Mr. G. Tyler) to the President, Mr. Wilson Crewdson, J.P., and the Vice-President, Major Vipan. Admirable arrangements had been made for the enjoyment of the company by the Secretary, Mr. W. W. Hoad (Serjeant Buzfuz), and the evening was unanimously voted a great success.

Hull.

REV. J. G. PATTON gave his lecture on "Some Religious Characters in Dickens" on 18 December, which he opened with an outline of the religious influences of home life which Dickens received when a lad, showing how in after life, although never a believer in "isms," he spoke of the eternal truths as realities, in which he believed with all his heart; but he would not accept any man's interpretation of them. He did not, it is true, often sing "psalms and hymns in church"; but his religion was more uncommon, for he sang them in his heart, and sang them in his beautiful prose idylls to the glory of God, and to the great comfort and relief of the people of God. His was a practical religion, he preached the Gospel of Christ in its practical simplicity, after the example of the Great Master Himself, and with very little human theology, and certainly no "higher criticism," for Christ's interpretation of the Scriptures was enough for him.

Liverpool.

A MUCH appreciated entertainment, consisting of a tea, followed by a Christmas tree, from which toys were distributed, was given by the "Jenny Wren League" of the Liverpool and Birkenhead Branch, to poor children from the districts surrounding Bootle, Ford, Litherland, Waterloo, and Crosby, on Thursday evening, 3 January. About

160 youngsters partook most eagerly of the good things provided, and afterwards joined lustily in several popular songs and choruses. The treat was organized and splendidly managed by Mrs. E. H. Bell, Hon. Treasurer, assisted by several members of the Fellowship and other friends. During the evening some musical items were given by kind friends, and were hugely enjoyed by the children. Canon Dickson, vicar of Christ Church, Waterloo, generously gave the free use of the schools for the occasion.

The opening meeting of the second half of the present session was held in the Common Hall, Hackins Hey, on 10 January. The chair was occupied by the President of the Branch, Mr. Edgar A. Browne, F.R.C.S. A limelight lecture on "Charles Dickens and the Stage" was to have been given by Mr. J. James Hewson, but that gentleman was prevented from attending personally through ill-health. He, however, kindly lent the MS. and slides of his lecture. Mr. J. R. Ramsden read the clever and witty composition in a clear and effective manner, and Mr. F. Embury manipulated the lantern and slides in a conspicuously able fashion. The entertainment was heartily appreciated by the audience, who at the close of the evening accorded a well-deserved vote of thanks to Messrs. Hewson, Ramsden, and Embury.

Manchester.

AT the December meeting, Mr. W. H. Vaughan presiding, Mr. R. J. Broughton read a paper entitled "An Evening with Dickens," and Mrs. Broughton gave illustrative recitals, including "Boots at the Holly Tree Inn," and the poem found in Dickens's desk after his death—"The Children." In the course of a subsequent discussion, Mr. Arthur Humphreys mentioned that he had recently become the possessor of the portrait of a little-known prototype of one of Dickens's characters, namely, Polly Toodle, alias Nurse Richards, the good nurse in *Dombey and Son*.

At the January meeting held at the Portico Library, Mr. Edward Briggs presiding, Mr. Alfred Wood read a paper on "Dickens as a Social Reformer." He described in detail the many social improvements which had been brought about directly or indirectly by the power of the novelist's pen. Among the abuses referred to, special reference was made to the reform in legal procedure which Dickens in *Bleak House* had shown to be so necessary in the interests of the public. During the discussion which followed, Mr. Albert Nicholson said he believed that had Dickens lived ten years longer he would in his writings have gone in for temperance reform, and the Rev. R. W. G. Hunter pointed out that, differing from many other eminent novelists, Charles Dickens endeavoured by personal effort to achieve the reforms advocated in his books. After the discussion Mr. Stanley recited the speech of Serjeant Buzfuz from *Pickwick*.

Melbourne.

A VERY successful meeting took place on 3 December. We have had an increase of thirty-three new members during the month, and our roll now numbers 189 members since the annual meeting in September. Mr. A. Hunt read a paper on "Why are Dickens's works not popular with young Australians?" and although he thought he proved his case, subsequent speakers showed that Australians do appreciate the works of the master. The other items on the programme were recitals by Miss Windas, Mr. E. Smith, and Mr. F. Shann; and a dramatic scene, "Lady Dedlock and Tulkinghorne," by Mr. and Mrs. Windas. On 10 December an interesting programme was rendered in the presence of a large and appreciative audience in aid of the Victorian Braille Writers' Association for the Blind. It is confidently expected that a substantial amount will be available for this very deserving object. The programme consisted of a comedietta entitled "A Happy Pair," by Mr. and Mrs. Windas, the evergreen dramatic scene in character, "Sairey Gamp and Betsey Prig," by Mrs. Windas and Mrs. Harrison, and musical and elocutionary items by other members and friends.

Southampton.

THE members of this Branch celebrated the New Year on 1 January by giving a tea to over two hundred poor children. Excellent arrangements were carried out, a bountiful repast being thoroughly enjoyed by the little ones, following which was an entertainment. On leaving each child was given a bun, an orange, and a packet of sweets.

A most enjoyable social evening took place on 21 January, during which two sketches were given by members from *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Pickwick Papers*, the characters being admirably sustained by the Misses E. Tracy, D. Young, G. Greenwood, Messrs. M. Sprague, Chas. Tracy, and others. A reading by Mr. M. Sprague and musical items by members of the S.G.C. party contributed to the pleasure of the evening.

Stockport.

FRESH from a successful tour in America, Mr. John Duxbury gave a recital on 21 December of Dickens's *Christmas Carol* in the Stockport Sunday School, under the auspices of the branch, which numbers about one hundred members. Last year it made a useful contribution to the fund organized by the police force for affording in the summer an outing for some hundreds of the poor children of the town. The proceeds of Mr. Duxbury's recital will go to the same excellent purpose.

Toronto.

WILLIAM STERLING BATTIS, of Chicago, gave a dramatic recital of *Nicholas Nickleby*, under the auspices of the Branch, on 2 November. Great things were expected of Mr. Battis, and he ably upheld his reputation as a Dickens interpreter. The entertainment netted a substantial sum for the Dickens Cot Fund. The regular monthly meeting of the Branch was held on 20 November at the Conservatory of Music ; subject, *Sketches by Boz*. Mrs. McCoy, Mrs. Hart, Mrs. Street, Mr. Bell-Smith, and Mr. Creighton took part in the programme.

The Branch again provided the Christmas dinner for the patients in the Home for Incurable Children, and has already in hand the necessary amount for the maintenance of the Dickens Cot in this home for the year 1907.

On Friday, 7 December, the President of the Branch, Mr. E. S. Williamson, gave his illustrated lecture-recital, "An Evening with Dickens," at Guildhall, under the auspices of the Branch, the entire proceeds to be sent as a contribution to the National Dickens Library Fund. Notwithstanding the severity of the weather, there was a large and appreciative audience. A substantial sum will be sent to the library fund as a result of the entertainment.

The regular monthly meeting of the Branch took place at the Conservatory of Music on 18 December ; subject, "Christmas Books."

West London.

ON 20 December another successful meeting of the Branch was held in the Lecture Hall, Town Hall, Ealing. Miss Mead gave two most appropriate recitations from *A Christmas Carol*, of "Mr. Fezziwig's Ball" and the "Cratchits' Christmas Dinner." Mr. Graves read "The Boots at Holly Tree Inn," and Mr. Leicester Romayne read his clever paper on the "Graces and Virtues of Mrs. Nickleby," which threw quite a new light upon the dear lady's eccentricities, in his usual excellent style. Mr. Chevob read from *Oliver Twist* three incidents in the life of Mr. Bumble. The evening concluded with a dialogue, well rendered by Mrs. Morris and Miss Nichols, taken from *Oliver Twist*, "Nancy's Appointment on London Bridge." Mr. Chevob presided.

Forest Gate.

A HIGHLY successful and enjoyable evening was passed by members on 10 January. A social and concert-recital was held in the Earlham Hall, the small hall being crowded by members and friends. Miss Eva Fryett, of Ilford, gave recitals of "The Death of Sydney Carton" and "Fezziwig's Ball," receiving encores for each item. The Concordia Glee-men delighted the large audience with their part-songs and solos, and Master Albert Bedingham and Mr. H. Gentry played pianoforte and violin solos respectively. Mr. Webb presided.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"I didn't know, and now I do know, and that shows the advantage of asking, don't it?"—ROSA DARTLE.

QUESTIONS

EDWIN DROOD.—Is it known who wrote the article "Suggestions for a Conclusion," in *Cornhill*, March, 1884?

On page 293 of Vol. I of *The Dickensian*, Mr. G. F. Gadd describes "Gillan Vase," the authoress of *A Great Mystery Solved*, as "a lady of some literary reputation in the North of England." Is anything further known as to the identity of this lady? SAPSEA.

DICKENS AND BALZAC.—Is Charles Dickens the author of any of the following articles on Balzac, which appeared in *All the Year Round;* and if not, who is the author of each article?

Vol. I, pp. 184–9, 205–10, "Balzac and his Publisher."

Vol. XLIX (New Series, Vol. XXIX), pp. 153–7, "Balzac and Alexandre Dumas."

Vol. LXIII, p. 41, "Balzac and his Secretary."

Also, may I ask: In which article occurs the following tribute to Balzac, credited to Charles Dickens? "He ranks as one of the few great geniuses who appear by ones and twos in century after century of authorship, and who leave their mark ineffaceably on the literature of their age." Did Dickens write anything else in reference to Balzac?

WILLIAM H. ROYCE.

BROOKLYN.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DICKENS AND LAUSANNE

SIR,—It may interest Dickensians to learn that the room in the Villa Rosemont, Lausanne, where so much of *Dombey* was written, is known to-day as the "Dickens Room." I found the key of the room so labelled on calling at the Villa last summer. The building is now used as a boarding school for young ladies, Dickens's former study having been converted into a dormitory. A new street terminating at the Villa has recently been made, and the municipality have named it "Avenue Dickens." Is there a street in this country named after our great novelist?

Yours faithfully, ARTHUR HUMPHREYS.

MANCHESTER.

MR. CHESTERTON, DICKENS, AND POST CARDS

SIR,—In common with the rest of the world, I have read and reread Mr. Chesterton's illuminating allusions concerning Charles Dickens with the greatest interest.

Here is one of them about which I do not remember seeing any remark in any review or other notice. It seems to me that the pages of *The Dickensian* might worthily record it as a wonderful instance of Dickens's never-varying propensity to keep ahead of his time.

In chapter IX., page 214, the author writes: "His [Dickens's] shortest post card is often as good as his ablest novel; each one of them is different"; and he goes on to dilate upon other characteristics of his post cards.

Now Dickens died on 9 June, 1870, and the first British post card was issued on 1 October, 1870. Yours faithfully, WILMOT CORFIELD.

25 MANGOE LANE, CALCUTTA, 17 *December*, 1906.

THE FAVOURITE FLOWER OF DICKENS

SIR,—When I read the assertion of Mr. Percy Fitzgerald that a red carnation invariably formed a portion of the great novelist's dress, I felt sure it was a slip of the pen.

Each time I heard Dickens read at St. James's Hall, he always had a bunch of the brightest scarlet geraniums in his dress coat.

Miss Dickens, in her delightful reminiscences of her father in *Cornhill* (January, 1885), says: "He loved all flowers, and scarlet geraniums were his favourite of all. At Gad's Hill there were two large beds of these flowers on the front lawn, and when they were fully out, making one scarlet mass, there was blaze enough even to satisfy *him*." Also that her sister laughingly told him one day that she thought when he was an angel, his wings would be made of looking-glass and his crown of scarlet geraniums.

Scarlet geraniums are as indelibly associated with Dickens as the primrose is with Lord Beaconsfield and the violet with Napoleon.

Yours faithfully, H. T. TAVERNER.

THE FERNS, ROMFORD.

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH

BOOKS

The Dickensian, 1906. The monthly numbers bound in one volume with green wrappers. London: Chapman and Hall. 4s. net.

The Story of the "Cheeryble" Grants: From the Spey to the Irwell. By the Rev. W. Hume Elliot. Illustrated. Manchester and London: Sherratt and Hughes. 4s. net.

Gravesend. By Alex. J. Philip. (Homeland Handbooks.) Containing chapter on "Boz and the Town." London: The Homeland Association, Ltd. 1s. net.

Tom Pinch's Ride to London. De la More Press. 6d. net, paper; 1s. net, cloth.

MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

"The Dickensian," vol. 1906. Reviews in *Daily Graphic*, 14 December; *Westminster Gazette*, 17 December; *Glasgow Weekly Citizen*, 22 December; *Glasgow Herald*, 22 December; *Scotsman*, 24 December; *Guardian*, 27 December; *Daily Chronicle*, 1 January; *Sheffield Daily Independent*, 2 January; *Spectator*, 5 January; *Athenæum*, 5 January; *Manchester City News*, 5 January; *T. P.'s Weekly*, 11 January; *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 12 January; *Bazaar*, 11 January; *Liverpool Mercury* (Leader), 21 January.

"The Story of the 'Cheeryble' Grants." Reviews in *Manchester Guardian*, 21 December; *Manchester City News*, 22 December; *Manchester Despatch*, 2 January.

"Christmas Dead." By G. R. Sims. *Manchester Daily Dispatch*, 13 December.

"A Christmas Garland: Dickens." By G . . rge M . . re. *Saturday Review*, 15 December. "Christmas Day." By G. K. Ch . st . rt . n. *Ibid.*, 29 December.

"Dickens and Salisbury Plain"; "Dickens and Mr. Winkle's Duel." *Notes and Queries*, 15 December.

"The Dickens Christmas." *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 17 December.

"Looking Christmas in the Face." *Speaker*, 22 December.

"The Shop of Ghosts." By G. K. Chesterton. *Daily News*, 22 December.

"Gay Boys go North: Christmas Study of the Railway." By George Edgar. *Reader*, 22 December.

"Popularity of Dickens." *Natal Witness*, 22 December, 1906.

"The New Christmas Carol" (Poem). By Dagonet. *The Referee*, 23 December.

"A Merry Xmas to you all." *Weekly Dispatch*, 23 December.

"The Old Firm" (Day and Martin's). *P.T.O.*, 22 December.
"The Christmas of Dickens." By G. K. C. *Morning Post*, 25 December.
"Hard Times." By Richard Davey. *Brighton and Hove Society*, 29 December.
"By-Ways of Dickens's London." Illustrated. *Daily Chronicle*, 26 December.
"Charles Dickens and Christmas." By Edwin S. Crandon. *Boston: New England Craftsman*, December.
"In Praise of Dickens." By P. E. M. New York. *The Nation*, 13 December.
"Dickens and Christmas" (Poem). By Bingley Wilson. *Leeds Yorkshire Evening News*, 24 December. [January.
"Dickens and Shorthand." By E. H. Butcher. *The Shorthand Gazette*,
"Charles Dickens Revisited." By W. A. Sibbald. *Westminster Review*,
"Mr. Frank Kidson" (Portrait.) *Leeds Mercury*, 4 January. [January.
"George Eliot and Dickens." *Notes and Queries*, 5 January.
"Dickens and Brontë Survivals." *T. P.'s Weekly*, 16 January.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS

FEBRUARY

1. Shrewsbury Branch: Meeting, at Alkmund's Rooms, at 8.
2. Liverpool Branch: Whist Drive.
6. Powerstock Branch: Social Evening.
   Bristol and Clifton Dickens Society: Birthday Anniversary Celebration. Annual Dinner.
7. Edinburgh Branch: Birthday Celebration, at 5 St. Andrew Square, at 8.
   Stockport Branch: Birthday Celebration, at Sunday School, at 8.
   Sheffield Branch: Birthday Celebration.
   Leeds Branch: Birthday Celebration, at Church Institute, at 8.
   Hull Branch: Birthday Celebration, at Albion Rooms, at 8.
   Birmingham Branch: Birthday Celebration, at Great Western Hotel, at 8.
   Southampton Branch: Birthday Celebration, at Kell Memorial Hall, at 8.
   York Branch: Birthday Celebration, at Lecture Hall, Lockett Street, at 8.
8. Manchester Branch: Birthday Celebration, at Portico Library, at 7.30.
   London: Celebration of the Ninety-fifth Anniversary of the Birth of Dickens, at Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, at 7.30. Mr. H. F. Dickens, K.C., in the chair. Admission to non-members, 1s.
9. Brighton Branch: Birthday Celebration, at Steine House, at 8.
11. Brixton Branch: "Kentish Dickensland," by Mr. R. Allbut, at 8.
13. Liverpool Branch: "A Seventeenth-century Diary," by Mr. R. T. Bodey, at Commin Hall, Hackins Hey, at 8.
    Bristol and Clifton Dickens Society: Short Papers, "My Favourite Book," at 20 Berkeley Street, at 8.
14. Forest Gate Branch: Members' Night, at Earlham Hall, at 8.
15. Shrewsbury Branch: Meeting, at Alkmund's Rooms, at 8.
21. Edinburgh Branch: "The Watching of a Great City," by Chief Constable Ross, at 5 St. Andrew Square, at 8.
    Leeds Branch: "A Study of a Humbug: Mr. Pecksniff," by G. F. Furniss, at Church Institute, at 8.
    Blackheath Branch: *Edwin Drood*, by Mr. Willoughby Matchett, at Avenue House, Lewisham. Chairman, Mr. B. W. Matz.
22. Winnipeg Branch: Discussion, *Martin Chuzzlewit*.
    Sheffield Branch: Social Meeting, at Cutlers' Hall, at 8.
    Hull Branch: *Great Expectations*, by Miss A. Hall, at Albion Rooms, at 8.
25. Brixton Branch: Whist Drive, at 8.
27. Liverpool Branch: Social Evening, at Commin Hall, at 8.
28. West London Branch: Monthly Meeting, at Municipal Buildings, at 8.
    Chesterfield Branch: "An Evening with Dickens," by Mr. Creaser, at Trinity Institute, at 8.

LITTLE NELL

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